

COUNTY RURAL ROAD SYSTEM

DRAFT

Improvements to the rural road system will occur throughout the county. The amount of new pavement installed will depend upon the growth in traffic and population, and the fiscal resources available in the future to make the improvements.

The future County Paved Road Network is subject to extreme impacts from the more dense development (close to the City) to those roads experiencing slow to moderate growth (generally outside the three mile limit). These impacts and the resulting improvements vary from simply grading and graveling a road to a 4-lane facility.

Road improvements for the County are triggered based upon daily traffic volumes with the amount of traffic dictating the type and degree of improvement necessary.

The first level of traffic volume is in the range of 300 vehicles per day. At this level, the County acquires a minimum of 100 feet of right of way, with additional ROW acquisition standards applying as appropriate. Once the ROW is acquired, the County then grades and installs new drainage structures. The process of grading and graveling provides a road profile that is safer and wider. This profile can accommodate the next level of improvement, which would be pavement, provided the traffic counts continue to increase to the second level.

The acquisition of the wider right-of-way will also preserve the future corridors for the larger and more expansive street improvements that will come with the growth of Lincoln. The second level of improvement, which is pavement, is triggered at a traffic volume level of about 400 vehicles per day. This second level should remain as an effective transportation facility, with the exception of routine maintenance and pavement overlays, until the traffic volumes reach the level of 6,000 vehicles per day. This final level would be the target for looking at the need to install a four-lane divided facility.

The County Road Plan indicates some “road widenings” for those existing two lane paved roads that are no longer adequate for today’s traffic volumes. The County’s road improvement plan also includes new railroad viaducts planned near Hickman and Firth to address increasing competition at rail crossings from both rail and vehicular traffic. New roadway openings included in this Plan provide for continuity in the road system and better serve the adjacent areas. These segments include:

- 98th Street, A Street to “O” Street
- 98th Street, “O” Street to Holdrege Street
- 98th Street, Adams Street to Fremont Street
- 112th Street, Pine Lake Road to Yankee Hill Road

This brief explanation of County road improvements and the different levels of traffic volumes that trigger those improvements is an attempt to show that, generally, there exists a fairly orderly approach to project planning, programming and completion of the appropriate improvement.

This methodical approach does, however, become threatened when development precedes the improvements and becomes the controller of priorities and the limited fiscal resources available for road improvements. New development should locate along those facilities that have already received improvements capable of supporting such development. The Future County Road Improvements Plan shows county roads which are candidates for paving in the future.

A new program adopted in 2006 is the Rural-to-Urban Transition for Streets (RUTS). Lancaster County and the City of Lincoln agree it is mutually beneficial to provide better transition from county roads located within the three mile zoning jurisdiction of the City to City streets at the time of annexation. This process provides a more useful life from the public investment in these county roads while at the same time accommodating future growth of the city by establishing right-of-way and construction standards to allow these county roads to transition from rural to urban standards without disruption to the existing through traffic and the surrounding property.